

St Vincent's Voice

*The latest staff and
community news from*
**ST VINCENT'S HEALTH
NETWORK SYDNEY**

JANUARY 2017 — ISSUE 11

Psychogeriatric SOS team win prestigious Minister's Award



Inside this edition:
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Clinical Genomics Unit

St Joseph's introduces
solar power

A message from Anthony Schembri



CEO, ST VINCENT'S HEALTH NETWORK SYDNEY

This edition of St Vincent's Voice captures the dedication of all staff in *Striving for Something Greater*. 2016 has seen a year of significant challenges, and in contrast, significant achievements for us here at St Vincent's.

There is no doubt that the provision of healthcare across our diverse landscape of services brings with it a complex set of challenges that we must overcome. I am delighted to say that as we start 2017, we are in a position to make substantial change by addressing our Mission and Strategy. I look forward to the pages of future editions of St Vincent's Voice being filled with stories capturing our diverse endeavours.

One particular article I encourage you to read in this edition is the art therapy provided to our Huntington's patients at St Joseph's. I am always amazed by the difference our staff and volunteers make by engaging the creative spirit of our patients.



Short & Sharp



Woman of Influence

Congratulations to our Clinical Director, Alcohol and Drug Service, **A/Prof Nadine Ezard** who was named as one of **Australia's 100 Women of Influence by the Financial Review and Westpac**. Nadine was recognised for her public policy work in harm minimisation.

No time to lose at Sacred Heart

Well done to our colleagues in Sacred Heart Health Service who have led the way in workplace health and safety with having gone two consecutive years with no lost time injuries. **Congrats for all the work you are doing to keep our people safe.**



Welcome to the team!

St Vincent's would like to welcome Mr Mark Zacka to the role of Director of Clinical Governance for SVHNS following a national competitive selection process.

Mark has an impressive background in quality, patient safety and clinical governance having served as the director of clinical governance for Justice Health Speciality Health Network and the South Western Sydney Local Health District. In these roles, Mr Zacka was responsible for clinical governance, patient safety, accreditation and quality across those networks of hospitals and community health services.



INSPIRED TO CARE



St Vincent's launches game-changing Clinical Genomics Unit

In collaboration with the Garvan Institute, St Vincent's recently launched Australia's first Clinical Genomics Unit.

Genomics describe the analysis of the DNA in our cells – the genetic features that we inherit from our parents that make us the way we are, and which play a major role in our health.

The new Unit will enable whole genome sequencing to understand the basis for hereditary diseases, and pave the way for tailored measures to minimise risk of disease. In doing so, suitable patients are now offered a form of precision medicine following recent advances in the field of genomics, by bringing together existing and new expertise on the St Vincent's campus.

Treating patients with a wide variety of diseases, the Unit is working with the Garvan's GenomeOne, where Doctors from a variety of specialist units throughout the St Vincent's Campus are now able to refer patients to the multidisciplinary Unit for a consultation by a geneticist. Appropriate patients will then

undergo clinical genomic testing and analysis.

The Hon. Pru Goward, Minister for Medical Research who was on hand to officially launch the Unit, said "the partnership between The Garvan and St Vincent's to establish this service is a watershed moment for health care in Australia - this unit will transform clinical practice".

Prof Jerry Greenfield, Founder of the St Vincent's Clinical Genomics Unit explained, "For the first time, we will be able to access genomic information about our patients that will shine new light on their disease, enabling far more informed diagnoses and treatments. In some instances we may find other diseases present, in other cases we might revise the diagnosis and in the majority of cases we will be more enlightened about the patient's individual disease to enable us to provide more precise and tailored treatment".

Dr Kathy Wu, Lead Clinician Geneticist of the Unit added, "Through the Unit's testing, clinicians will be provided with diagnostic information which until now has not been available. Testing can potentially open up other options such as predictive testing for patients' relatives, allowing them to take preventative measures if appropriate."

Unveiling the plaque along with A/Prof Anthony Schembri, Minister Goward said of the new service:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is THE game changer we have been waiting for in the delivery of health care"

HON. PRU GOWARD



How patients brush up on skills

“Art is what you can see when you can’t see”. One of Stephen Dernocoure’s art students said this to him – and he’s never forgotten it. Partly because this student had experienced a life of considerable psycho-social disruption on top of having Huntington’s Disease, a progressive brain disorder that causes uncontrolled movements, emotional problems, and loss of cognition.

Although Huntington’s Disease had taken away most of her motor skills, she could still create art. It’s this outpouring of emotional expression that Stephen believes helps art students affirm their self-acuity, despite what the disease is doing to their bodies.

An experienced art therapist, Stephen works with Huntington’s Disease patients and residents at St Joseph’s Hospital once a week, guiding them through brush strokes and paint rolling to create painting, drawings, fabric prints, and even silent film. Although Stephen mainly helps his students create visual art, sometimes it’s not something the student wants to do, or is able to do. He helps them express themselves creatively in whatever

way they’re able to – including poetry and verbal expression.

Having worked with patients with Huntington’s for over 15 years as well as palliative care patients, Stephen says his challenge lies in helping his students work with tools such as brushes and paint rollers – making brush handles thicker so his students can grip them, or adding handles to printing frames so they can hold them.

Stephen sees his classes as a way of guiding the patients; teaching them technique and colour selection in a staged step-by-step function, according to the needs and abilities of the patients, but ultimately being led by their creative expression and what they want to create.

“This art program assists the residents to give legitimate form and language to their thoughts and feelings in a supportive and nurturing environment” Stephen said. Last year, Stephen exhibited his students’ art at St Vincent’s Hospital, giving them a showcase for their work, and hopes to repeat the exhibition again in 2017.

“This art program assists the residents to give legitimate form and language to their thoughts and feelings in a supportive and nurturing environment”
STEPHEN DERNOCOURS

INSPIRED TO CARE

Solar Panels Installed at St Joseph's Hospital

As part of the SVHA National Energy Action Plan (NEAP), St Joseph's Hospital was very proud to be the first SVHA facility nationally to have solar panels installed.

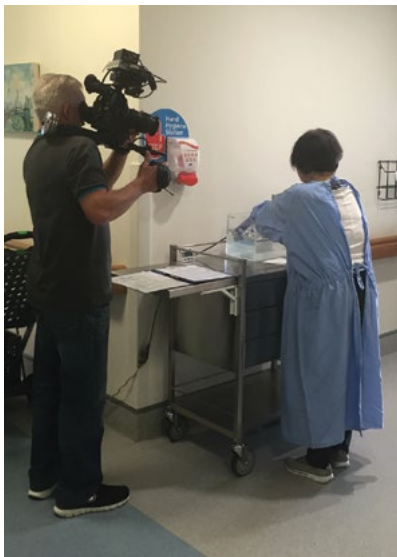
Once the roll-out is complete across 17 SVHA locations, the panels are expected to generate approximately 4,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually and reduce our national scope 2 emissions by 3,500 tonnes. Cost savings of the NEAP are estimated to result in \$6 million annually which will further support the provision of health care, as well as significantly reducing our environmental footprint.



MATT POWER GROUP MANAGER – ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT WITH THE INSTALLATION TEAM AND SJH STAFF

INSPIRED TO SHINE

Miracle Hospital



St Vincent's will be the feature of a brand new National Geographic television 10 part documentary series, screened internationally, Miracle Hospital.

Miracle Hospital takes the viewer behind the scenes at St Vincent's, where our specialist teams use the very latest science and technology to perform ground-breaking and lifesaving procedures, every day. You can expect to see familiar faces including Dr Emily Granger, Dr Mark Winder and Prof Steven Faux to name just a few, this coming February 21st at 8.30pm 2017, screening on Foxtel's National Geographic Channel. Stay tuned!

INSPIRED TO SERVE



Clinician of the Year goes to...

Lisa-Jayne Ferguson is one of our dedicated Alcohol & Drug Clinical Nurse Consultants who works tirelessly to provide holistic, patient focused & evidence based care for some of our most marginalised populations.

Recently Lisa-Jayne's skills and dedication to our patients was formally recognised, when she was awarded Clinician of the Year by the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol & Other Drugs! Congratulations Lisa-Jayne, we couldn't be more proud.

ANNUAL STAFF BALL

Staff scrub up nicely for annual Staff Ball

There was plenty of glamour at the 2016 annual Staff Ball with a classic 'black and white' theme, revellers were dressed to impress and primed for a well-earned night off duty to spend with their colleagues. Held at Sydney's Sheraton on the Park, party goers were treated to a sumptuous three course meal and entertainment to keep them dancing the night away.



INSPIRED TO SERVE



Psychogeriatric SOS project wins prestigious award

Congratulations to the St Vincent's Psychogeriatric SOS team, who have recently accepted two major health awards for their service, offering clinician-to-clinician e-Outreach services for rural Australians.

The team were recognised at the 2016 Mental Health Matters Awards, presented by the Mental Health Association of NSW; and also took out the prestigious Minister's Award at the 2016 NSW Health Awards, which recognises excellence in the provision of mental health services, and is awarded at the discretion of the NSW Minister for Mental Health, Pru Goward.

INSPIRED TO LEAD

St Vincent's leads the way with medicinal cannabis clinical trial to improve pain for people with terminal disease



The anecdotal evidence that cannabis has a positive effect on a long list of medical conditions from epilepsy, to pain and cancer is building.

However, to date there's been very little clinical evidence to back up these claims. At St Vincent's, Director of Palliative Care, A/Prof Richard Chye is starting a clinical trial with terminally ill cancer patients to discover how medicinal cannabis can help with pain and appetite. "A lot of patients tell me cannabis helps them forget that they're in bad pain and makes them feel better," Dr Chye said. "But we need to understand what is in the medical cannabis. We need to understand its side effects, and what dose what dose to prescribe".

The trial is using raw cannabis, imported from the Netherlands and will commence in early 2017.

Trial participants will inhale vapours three times a day from the crushed leaf and flowers through a vaporiser. It is hoped, that this alternative treatment could provide effective pain relief and a return in appetite for our patients with terminal illness.

INSPIRED TO CARE

Innovative new program to improve Mental Health Services at St Vincent's

Earlier this year St Vincent's Darlinghurst launched the Centre for Family-Based Mental Health Care, in partnership with the University of Sydney.

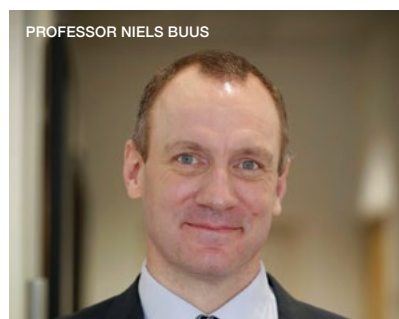
The Centre is focussed on addressing the need for a recovery-orientated approach to mental health care with a stronger focus on young people, early intervention, and involving families and carers in treatment as well as service design.

To that end, the team have introduced the Open Dialogue Program, an innovative approach to mental health care that has seen impressive recovery rates abroad.

Open Dialogue is a program that brings the patient together with their family, friends and health professionals. Together, they explore their different perspectives on the patients' psychosis in a safe and supported space. It operates on the basis of core humanistic values of openness, social inclusion, and personal autonomy

and genuine user and family involvement in the decision-making processes.

Led by Professor Niels Buus, this flexible approach to each individual and their loved ones includes mobile intervention teams and peer supported discussion, and has the capacity to reduce alienation of patients' and their families by avoiding paternalistic decisions and interventions. For many, contact with mental health services can be disruptive and confrontational. The Open Dialogue Program will ensure that families are met by an open and genuinely listening approach that will encourage better use of health care services, with improved outcomes for patients and their families.



“It is exciting to be part of a great team of carers, service users, mental health professionals, and university academics in implementing Open Dialogue at St Vincent's. We all look forward to offering Open Dialogue to families and networks affected by mental health problems”

PROFESSOR BUUS



FEATURE INTERVIEW

KNOW YOUR PRODUCT

Interview with Alexandra Miller



Alex joined St Vincent's in 2015 in the new role of Manager, Domestic Violence and Community Social Work. She provides strategic leadership around the Hospital's response to men and women who have experienced domestic and family violence.

What major breakthroughs in your field do you think/hope we will see in the future?

Australia is beginning to appreciate the extent to which women and children in particular are experiencing domestic and family violence (1 in 4 lifetime prevalence) and the impact this is having on their health - domestic and family violence (DFV) is the leading contributor to morbidity and mortality in women aged 15 to 44 years

In the next 12 months, St Vincent's will be running a pilot project introducing routine questions about DFV as part of our clinical assessment in ED, enabling clear pathways for staff to respond to concerns or disclosures about DFV and continuing to provide counselling through our specialist services. These strategies will be supported by training and education for staff across the public hospital.

More broadly, I would like to see a whole of government approach to preventative measures including safe relationships education from an early age; government policies which reflect gender equality; and support for employees who are experiencing DFV through corporate workforce support policies, such as the industry leading policy we have at SVHA.

What are the challenges you see now and in the coming years?

The biggest challenge is addressing the underlying causes of domestic violence. Gender inequality is so entrenched, but tackling this issue requires energy from all sections of the community, not just families and individuals. We need ongoing, long-term commitment from government, media, education, clergy, health, families, services and all sections of the community to address gender inequality and the use of violence against women and children.

What do you love the most about what you do?

I love supporting our staff to think about what they can do in their area about DFV. If everyone is invested in addressing this issue, we can improve the safety of all those impacted by DFV, and achieve better health outcomes for them in the longer term.

What motivates you on a daily basis?

Understanding that the response to survivors of DFV by health care providers makes a real difference when it comes to domestic and family violence.

Facts & Figures



317

Staff at St Joseph's Hospital



93

Heart & Lung transplants this year to date. The most ever!



66%

Female workforce across SVHNS



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